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ABSTRACT

The Career Opportunities Program (COP), an initiative of the U.S. Office of Education, ended on June 30, 1976. COP attempted to provide opportunity for indigenous community residents working as paraprofessional teacher aides in the nation's low-income and rural schools to advance with the education profession through training and merit and, ultimately, to improve the learning of the children in those schools. From its inception in 1969 as the largest new program originating from the authority of the Educational Professions Development Act (also expired), COP was conceived as a means of addressing such central educational issues as: (1) strengthening the self and group identity of the children of the poor, the minorities, and the alienated; (2) using training programs as an instrument of and catalyst for educational change; (3) bringing new and different persons into the schools to play new and different roles; and (4) developing relations of equality (parity) among participants, schools, communities being served, and colleges. The focus of COP was on the paraprofessional teacher aide, who was usually a minority (54% Black, 14.3% Hispanic-American, 3.7% Native American) and who came from the neighborhood in which she worked. Eighty-eight percent of the participants were female. Each COP participant received college-based training that would qualify her for a teaching certificate as an ultimate objective and, in any case, improved performance and credentials as an aide. The total cost for the 7-year COP effort was approximately $130,000,000. The program embraced 132 sites, roughly 18,000 participants, close to 3,000 schools, and 272 colleges and universities. COP produced a significant number of teachers from populations heretofore little represented in the teacher force. It is clear that a federally-designed program can be mounted across the country and that it can provide a means to meet an important national priority. (MM)

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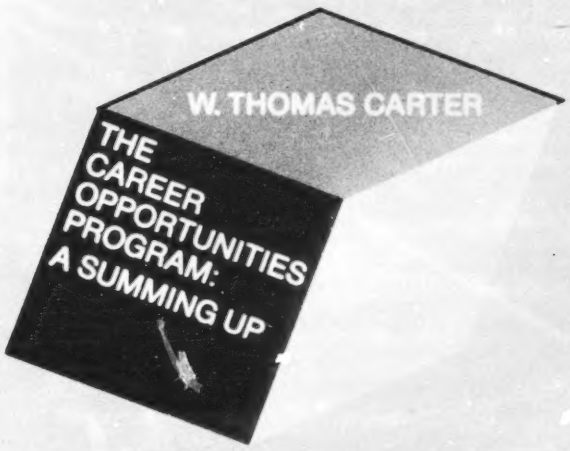

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THE CAREER OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM

A SUMMING UP

W. THOMAS CARTER

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE CAREER OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM: A SUMMING UP

The Career Opportunities Program, an initiative of the U. S. Office of Education, terminated at midnight on June 30, 1976. Joining COP in its expiration was the authorizing Education Professions Development Act (EPDA) of June 29, 1967, which represented the U. S. Government's major foray of the century into the arenas of teacher training and staff development.

The Career Opportunities Program was a straightforward attempt to provide the opportunity for indigenous community residents working as paraprofessional teacher aides in the nation's low-income and rural schools to advance within the education professions through training and merit, and, ultimately, to improve the learning of the children in those schools. Mostly female (88%), of low-income and/or minority backgrounds, and, for the most part, in their high twenties and thirties, the 18,000-odd participants in COP's 132 projects nonetheless underwent as rigorous a regimen as any student in teacher training in the 1970s. Working full school days as instructional paraprofessionals, as many as half of the COP aides in the nearly 3,000 public schools employing COP participants managed to complete degree work under pressures calculated to defeat all but the hardiest and most powerfully motivated. And, even in the throes of a heavily publicized national surplus of teachers, most of the degree-achievers obtained employment as fully certified teachers, usually in the same ghetto, barrio, reservation or rural schools in which they had performed as aides.

With its $129 million and five-year-duration (1970-1975),* COP was neither a permanent national program nor a pilot effort. Rather, it was, in the words of Dr. William L. Smith, an early national COP administrator (and present Director of Teacher Corps), a "mid-range demonstration" which "brings together a series of program ideas found successful in earlier, more limited efforts, and seeks to demonstrate the potential in their combination and expansion." As such, it demands analysis while dampening extravagantly high expectations.

*The previous and following years, making a COP span of seven, were planning and "mop-up" years; only in the 1970-75 period were all 132 projects in operation.

There were few, if any, discernible strains in COP which had not previously appeared in American teacher education. Some low-income, minority-origin aides had previously gone on to full certification and employment as teachers, notably through the channels of Head Start, Follow Through and ESEA Title I. Career ladders and lattices, important COP features, already existed in a few school systems. Community involvement and parity, built into the designs for COP and other EPDA programs had been gaining acceptance, first by the public and, in due course, by educational policy-makers. The craft of paraprofessionalism had advanced well beyond the tentative experiments of the 1950s. Site-based post-secondary instruction, bringing the college to the community, was relatively new but no novelty. Nor were open admissions, remedial courses for adult learners long absent from the classroom, or the practice and doctrine of "new careers," a movement which had already made its appearance in the programs of the "War on Poverty" five years earlier. And, when COP began, there was no dearth of federal programs aimed at alleviating the economic and social plights of the Black, Hispanic-American, Indian and poor rural communities of the country.

The lessons of COP derive, then, from the whole experience. Nominally a paraprofessional training program, COP respected its participants by providing superb advantages for self-realization and advancement while at the same time it exploited them to demonstrate the validity of certain larger notions about preparing instructional professionals. In the aggregate, however, no single factor, but rather an amalgam of forces, emerges as the central COP contribution. For COP was not just a popular front educational organization charged with advising or sharing decision-making authority with the public school hierarchy. Nor was it just the physical presence of a COP instructional aide in a Detroit inner city or Navajo reservation classroom. The binding element was training. Closely linked was cultural and group identity. And for these, no amount of structural innovation -- however valuable to the COP process were open classrooms, modular instruction, role differentiation, or any other -- could provide an adequate substitute. As long as the basic conditions were met, the COP formula was flexible, with weighting of the mix left largely to the sensitive discretion of site administration.

The basic conditions, all of them maintained throughout most of COP's life, were these:

> Training combined with intellectual experiences gained largely in the participating teacher training institutions and practical applications achieved in work as educational aides in public school classrooms.
>
> Sometimes reluctantly but usually with considerable competence, teacher training institutions developed site-based courses, engaged in on-site observation, and took part in community advisory councils -- all making higher education part of a rapidly changing scene rather than an observer of it,
>
> The role of the educational paraprofessional in the schools was sanctioned and legitimatized through carefully constructed opportunities for advancement, rewarding careers, and satisfying work.
>
> Children in the COP school were taught, as much by the example of the aides in their classrooms as from books, that being American Indian or Chicano or Puerto Rican or Cajun or Oriental or Black or hill country white was a source of pride and that these cultures should be nourished, not suppressed or discarded.

In varying degrees, these were the ingredients of the basic EPDA mix: training as a path to responsible, system-wide change; cultural diversity and pluralism; shared decision-making; on-site, field-based instruction and work experience; career mobility; and, to revive the principal cliche of the sixties, relevance.

Life at a COP site was not easy. Energized and ambitious though they were, COP's paraprofessionals were

nevertheless overextended. Family life and personal health often suffered or were sacrificed to the developing new careers. One group of Chicano aides in south Texas commuted 500 miles weekly between home, job and college. A group of rural West Virginians rivaled them -- and on back roads at that. In the western states -- notably Idaho, Utah, Montana and the Dakotas -- it was assumed that being a COP trainee meant long hours on the road, massive inconvenience, and little sleep. Variations on these themes dot the COP landscape. Training at a time of statistical teacher surplus, the COP aides often wondered whether and why the effort was worthwhile. And yet at site after COP site family-supporting mothers of six entered or reentered the academic "rat race," held full-time jobs, and scored 4.0 grade point averages! Remuneration was no answer. For the overwhelming bulk of COP's people -- whether in Vermont or Arizona -- seldom earned more than $3,500 in any year of their affiliation with the program. And they put in 16- and 18-hour days for the questionable privilege. Moonlighting was out of the question.

Reflecting EPDA-wide preoccupations, COP injected a unique kind of instructional professional into the nearly 3,000 schools in which it operated. Above all, these were people who came from the neighborhood and had committed themselves to remain there, both as teachers and as figures to be emulated by the children in their classrooms and their communities at large. Sharing the same problems and touched by the same social forces, child and teacher did not have to cross a gulf of communication. And the child had witnessed the teacher's own progression -- typically from mother and part-time worker (waitress, clerk, factory workers, anything) to classroom aide to degree-holding professional teacher. The same child had seen this neighbor become a respected and participating community force, an educated person, and a thoroughly understanding teacher.

Late in COP's life, in the 1974-75 school year, the New Careers Training Laboratory of Queens College undertook a multi-dimensional assessment of the COP graduates who had already begun to teach. The study used a variety of instruments both to judge the performance of the first-year COP teachers and to compare it to that of a matched group of first-year non-COP trained teachers in the same school buildings and grades at 15 sites across the country. The 15 were drawn as a stratified sample of the 132 COP projects.

The data -- which covered personal characteristics, attitudes, classroom behavior, and impact on pupils -- fell into a consistent pattern. The Career Opportunities Program trained teacher was more likely to have a more positive attitude toward teaching, be more socially oriented, have more vigor, be more original in thought, and receive a higher rating from the principal based on her/his work in the classroom. He or she was more supportive of student-initiated talk and less likely to ask questions soliciting rote responses. The children whom the COP-trained teacher taught had a more positive self-concept, their parents viewed more positively their attitudes toward school, and the children performed better on standardized achievement tests. Although many of the differences between the COP-trained and non-COP trained teachers are small, the pattern of differences is clear and consistent.

A second-year follow-up study by NCTI reinforced and sharpened the differences. At two additional sites -- bilingual projects in south Texas -- even greater variations favoring the COP teacher were found. There and at the 15 first-year sites, second-year investigation revealed a pattern of greater enthusiasm, stability and inter-personal skills by COP-trained teachers who, the study found, were becoming increasingly potent and constructive forces in their schools. The COP teachers had a more finely tuned sense of how to get things done in a school and, on the whole tended to be more demanding of the children. At the bilingual sites, where all of the teachers examined were rated well, it was found that the COP-trained group was even stronger than the admittedly strong non-COP teachers.

As COP and EPDA wind down, it is tempting to speculate about "what might have been" and "what if." But, in the last analysis, such speculation is pointless. Not because EPDA or its offshoot, COP, achieved perfection in their actual incarnation, but because the ingredients that went into bringing them to life were those that were available. They were human, institutional, and political, and COP was no more nor less than their product. The mixture might have been different but probably not by much. By any measure, this federal program did its job, often with high distinction. Its participants and the society which they served were thereby enriched.

Objectives and Means

From its inception in 1969 as the largest new program originating from the authority of the Education Professions Development Act (EPDA) of June 1967, the Career Opportunities Program (COP) was conceived as a means for addressing such central educational issues as:

-- strengthening the self and group identity of the children of the poor, the minorities, and the alienated;

-- using training programs as an instrument of and catalyst for educational change;

-- bringing new and different persons into the schools to play new and different roles; and

-- developing relations of equality (parity) among participants, school, communities being served, and colleges.

The centerpiece of COP was the paraprofessional teacher aide, who was usually a minority (54 percent Black, 14.3 percent Hispanic-American, 3.7 percent Native American) female (88 percent) and came from the neighborhood in which (s)he worked. This COP participant was destined, through COP, to receive college-based training which would qualify her/him for a teaching certificate as an ultimate objective and,in any case, improved performance and credentials as an aide. The total cost for the seven-year COP effort, of which five years represented local project activity, was approximately $130,000,000. The program embraced 132 sites roughly 18,000 participants, close to 3,000 schools, and 272 colleges and universities.

While the Education Professions Development Act provided for a variety of specific activities, it also provided far-reaching and broad general authority, notably in Part D, for the establishment of new programs. The Career Opportunities Program, formally launched in 1970, is a product of that broad authority, for there is no mention of it -- or of any program like it -- in the language of the Education Professions Development Act. In that sense, it was the product of the Office of Education rather than of explicitly expressed Congressional intent.

A number of factors provided background to and impetus for the establishment of the Career Opportunities Program. Among these were:

-- the perception in the middle and late 1960s of a present (and growing) teacher shortage, especially in and for schools serving the poor;

-- the recognition that the educational needs of low-income children were not being met by the schools as then staffed;

-- the broader sense of the inadequacy of the ways schools in general were staffed;

-- the positive experience of the early 1960s with the employment of community-based paraprofessionals, particularly in the anti-poverty program but also in schools; and

-- the growing belief that the then-present designs of teacher education were inadequate, particularly in preparing teachers for the children of the poor.

A new organizational entity, the Bureau of Educational Personnel Development (BEPD), was established to implement various of the programs established by the new EPDA. From the outset of both the legislation and BEPD, the principal new program was to be COP.

The COP design was relatively uncomplicated. It was to be a program of the U. S. Office of Education, which made grants to local school systems with the concurrence of the respective state departments of education to provide on-the-job training and college education to paraprofessionals working in schools serving low-income children. The participants would thereby mount a career ladder, earn a baccalaureate degree, and become eligible for a teacher's license. The training was provided in the schools by cooperating teachers, supervisory personnel, and Career Opportunities Program project staff, while the formal education was provided by a local college or university through a subcontract from the local COP project. With increased experience, training, and education, participants were expected both to become better teacher aides and, in most cases, to assume greater responsibility and status in the school system. At

the end of the program and with a degree and a teacher's license having been earned, a process that usually took four to six years for a person beginning with no previous college experience, the participant was available for employment as a full-fledged teacher.

Although COP was clearly not meant to threaten the institutions with which it worked, the U. S. Office of Education did consider it to be one of several contributors to educational change across a broad front including access to higher education, the professional preparation of teachers, the increased involvement of the community in school matters, and the development of more complex staffing patterns for schools. Some COP projects weighed in significantly in all of these areas, while others had more impact in one or two. No COP project, it appears safe to say, failed to make some impression -- at the least on the lives of the participants, at most on the futures of all of the institutions involved.

On access to higher education, the Career Opportunities Program was part of a broad array of forces pushing to break the near-monopoly of the young, white, middle-and upper-class full-time student. The Career Opportunities Program was unique in bringing to the colleges large numbers of students who were older and also workers.

Similarly, the Career Opportunities Program was only one of the forces working for changes in teacher education which would make it field-based, more inductive in curricula design, and more heavily focused upon demonstrable classroom competency. The special character of COP derived from the fullness of the field base, for the COP participants in the colleges' teacher education programs were simultaneously full-time classroom workers.

Not only were the Career Opportunities Program participants both workers in the school and students at the local college or university, they were also members of the community served by the school. Thus, the efforts of the Career Opportunities Program to develop increased community involvement in the school was not alone the work of a lay council seeking to play a governance role. By the presence of the participants, community involvement was by definition a control feature of each Career Opportunities Program project.

The employment of paraprofessionals in schools had preceded the Career Opportunities Program, and, during its existence, extended far beyond it; during the early 1970s the Career Opportunities Program participants accounted for fewer than five percent of the paraprofessionals in all schools. What was unique about the Career Opportunities Program in this regard was the fact that from their entry into the Career Opportunities Program, participants were engaged in activities directly related to pupil learning (and not shunted off to clerical or monitoring roles), and that the COP design was not a static staff differentiation model. Rather, individual participants were involved in a career development design moving from entry-level paraprofessional positions to licensed teachers. And as the Career Opportunities Program emphasized the utilization of paraprofessionals in roles of substantial involvement in the teaching/learning process, it, of necessity (as well as plan), affected the activities of the teachers in the classrooms. And the net results of both these sets of activities was increased individualization of instruction for children.

COP was designed to serve low-income and minority adults. Nearly nine-tenths of those enrolled were members of low-income families, and some seven-tenths were non-white. The continuing shortage of teachers with such backgrounds is seen, for example, in Alaska where 95 percent of the children in the State Operated Schools are Native (Aleut, Eskimo, or Indian), while 99 percent of the teachers at the start of the COP project were non-Native. On the Crow and Northern Cheyenne Reservations in Montana, only five of the 210 certified teachers in 1970 were Indians. At their conclusion, the Alaska Career Opportunities Program (run in concert with the Teacher Corps) will have quintupled the number of Native teachers, while the project serving the Crow and Northern Cheyenne will have increased the number of Indian teachers tenfold.

Throughout the Hispanic-American and Indian communities there was still a woeful underrepresentation of "indigenous" teachers. In Texas and the Southwest, for example, COP projects emphasized bilingual and bicultural (Hispanic) education, and in New York City, a significant focus was placed in meeting the needs of part of that cities Puerto Rican children.

The COP Paraprofessional

The COP Project Directors Handbook described potential COP participants as "individuals who have the ability and desire to spend a significant part of their working careers in providing better education for children of low-income families," as residents of the area served by the COP schools, and as persons of "low-income background." These qualifications were met with only limited exceptions and deviations. Left unstated in the Handbook was the implicit understanding that "low-income" meant "minority" and that the goals of the program were thus social and economic as well as educational.

Reporting on Pennsylvania's four COP projects (Smethport, Philadelphia, Scranton and Erie) in November 1974, a private evaluation firm, Educational Research Associates, noted the following:

> One of the specific objectives of this program was to introduce a different kind of person to the teaching field. This was interpreted to mean a kind of person who normally would not have gone to college to pursue a teacher preparation program. Consequently, these four projects involved, for the most part, people who normally would have been rejected in a standard admissions review.
>
> How did these different people make out in the academic game? One indication of their success is an almost incredibly low mortality rate; less than four per cent of all the COP participants were dropped from the program for academic problems. Yet another indication is provided by the project in Philadelphia which indicated in a survey of its participants that 85 percent had a C average or better and that 46 percent of the participants had an average of B or higher.
>
> Furthermore, in each project there are stories of the academic honors being bestowed on these "different" people. In each project there are participants who are on the Dean's List; in one project two of the COP participants are engaged in a very competitive race for the top average which is now in the neighborhood of 3.83 on a 4.0 scale. One specific indication of the academic honors already bestowed on these participants is that a total of 67 trainees have already graduated from college with honors.

> In the Philadelphia project alone, 27 students have already graduated with a grade point average of 3.5 or higher and have been named Presidential Scholars. This is especially remarkable when one considers that these are people who normally would not have been admitted to the institution of higher education. There have been other achievements by these COP participants in their educational pursuits. In one of the projects a number of the students have been appointed or elected to leadership positions in the regular student body; one of them even being named to a national council. In the other projects these different students have participated in the drama, in the school newspaper, and in other activities of the school.

The centerpiece of any COP enterprise was the trainee -- whether labeled aide, auxiliary (in New York City), paraprofessional, or intern(Vermont)-- around whom all COP activities revolved. The story of COP was thus the story of the human beings who were in it, and on their success hinged COP's success. For the participant was the agent whose work determined fulfillment or failure across the entire range.

Near the midway point in COP's history, a national survey revealed that 13,477 persons had participated in the program and 9,343 were then enrolled as full-fledged trainees. Over 86 percent were low-income family heads or members, 63 percent were recruited from various other governmental program, and 13 percent (this figure dwindled thereafter) were veterans of Vietnam-era military service. More than three-fourths of the trainees were non-white (54 percent Black, 14.3 Hispanic, 3.7 Native American, remainder scattered among Asian and others). Although the average participant was probably 31 or 32, COP also included teenagers and grandparents well into their sixties.

The people who became COP participants brought unique qualities and qualifications. The common personal denominators were a commitment to improving the educational performance of poor and/or minority children, the capacity to change careers, personal drive and ambition, and boundless stamina. Above all, her (or his) well developed sense of the needs of minority children was propelling her (or him) into the schools and beyond, into the postsecondary education that had never before been possible. With a few adjustments

on both sides, such a person was a future teacher. Moreover, at a time when involvement in community affairs had become recognized as an indispensible feature of a good teacher training program, the COP participant was the community -- from it, devoted to it, and determined to improve it. But release time was hard to come by, and COP people were often forced to lead three distinct lives -- fulltime work in the schools, a crushing academic load, and, because most were mothers, the domestic life that seem inevitably to be the first to be neglected. The baby-sitting husband or wife was no rarity in the COP scheme of things.

The full weight of this set of forces sat too heavily on some. Without sufficient dedication and dexterity, pure logistics could make COP participation all but impossible, and as many as one-third of those who began lasted less than one year. But those who stayed were the embodiment of the nation's best qualities.

Illustrations of the qualities of COP's participants are the best demonstration of the enormous diversity of background and interests they possessed. Some random examples:

-- A high school dropout employed as a janitor at Winston Elementary School in the Edgewood District of San Antonio, Texas, became a COP aide and enrolled at St. Mary's University

-- The cumulative grade point average of the Saginaw, Michigan, aides was significantly higher than that of the student bodies of Delta and Saginaw Valley College as a whole

-- Twenty-seven per cent of the participants in the Little Rock, Arkansas, project graduated with honors

-- COP participants, according to a survey of the California COP effort "could often bring a welcome dose of their real world experience to cloistered education courses taught by faculty who sometimes had not been in an elementary school classroom for years."

-- Roberta Ellis of COP Minneapolis, in her mid-forties, a divorced mother, was a country club kitchen worker from 5 p.m. to 6 a.m., took care of six to seven children plus several of her own in her home during the day, and somehow found time to teach Sunday school. Determined to become a teacher, she entered the Minneapolis New Careers program as a school aide and assumed a 19-21 credit quarterly load at the University of Minnesota. In August 1972, with five months of hospitalization from an automobile accident behind her, she graduated from the university and became a regular fifth grade teacher. Shortly thereafter, Ms. Ellis enrolled as a candidate for a graduate degree, one of countless COP graduate who kept on learning long after their COP phase had ended.

-- The average COP participant in the Gary, Indiana, COP project had been away from formal education for 25 years. And yet, in one year (1971-72), 43 COP aides were invited to join a national academic sorority. Since then, 60 Gary COP participants qualified for the Dean's List at the Purdue University Calumit Campus.

-- Prior to his participation in COP, Eugene Witlock, a veteran in the Louisville COP project, had been denied admission to a state college. As part of COP, he graduated from the University of Louisville while on the Dean's List and went on as a district employee to co-author a proposal for the evaluation of COP and alone designed a paraprofessional training institute in special education.

-- Not knowing it was improper, Gloria Enoex combined her attendance at one college as part of COP with simultaneous attendance in another, all this while working as a paraprofessional in the Grand Rapids, Michigan, schools. Having

thus earned her BA in two-and-a-half years, Ms. Enoex, a mother of eight, went on to gain an MA as a reading specialist in six months. One of Ms. Enoex's tactics, enabling her to do her school work and keep up with her family, was to have one of the children read to her as she cooked dinner.

-- Danny Gurule organized the recording of a disc featuring New Mexico's Lieutenant Governor and Gurule's students at Cristo Rey School in Santa Fe. The recording was done to raise money for a new school bus. Gurule completed his work at Santa Fe College and, unlike his fellow COP participants who will teach in the city's schools, he will become the Assistant Director of the College's Bilingual/Bicultural Studies Program. Already recognized with a listing in "Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities," Gurule is arranging with a pubisher for use of bilingual materials he developed while in COP.

-- Participants in the Miami, Florida, COP project formed a COP alumni association which, among other goals pledged that it would form a scholarship fund for participants who had not graduated by the scheduled termination of the project. The Racine, Wisconsin, COP alumni group also organized and declared itself to be an available source to the Racine school district.

-- Of 25 COP Richmond trainees attending Contra Costa College in California in the 1971-72 school year, 16 made the Dean's List. Three more received additional academic honors. Preliminary data indicate that in the larger COP world, the COP trainee was a better student than his or her non-COP peers -- all this, of course, while holding an aide's job and running a family.

-- Mrs. Ruth Winney, a Navajo Indian in her fifties, began her formal education as a

seven-year-old at a boarding school in Fort Defiance, Arizona, spent the rest of her childhood and early youth in schools away from home, and with a high school diploma to her credit, became an assistant in a Bureau of Indian Affairs School. The job could lead nowhere. College credits were unavailable, and the closest college was over 200 miles away. Then came the new Navajo Community College and COP, and Mrs. Winney was on her way.

-- In Baltimore, Maryland, 93 percent of the COP graduates held teaching posts in the city system by September 1975.

-- From the age of nine, Richard Gatica of Crystal City, Texas, spent at least half of every year as a migrant worker in the North. He left school after the eighth grade. In the Army, Gatica received a high school equivalency degree (GED) and, after discharge, held several jobs while amassing two years of postsecondary credits. An outstanding student in his COP years at Southwest Texas Junior College in Uvalde and Texas A&I in Laredo, he graduated early and assumed a bilingual teaching post in 1972. In 1974 Gatica was selected to be director of the same COP program which had given him his professional start.

These were almost random selections. In an era replete with inspirational tales of tardily discovered human potential unleashed, it became axiomatic that COP's dominant strength would be found in the aides. For every "ordinary" COP striver, there was a Dallas mother of eight who maintained a 4.0 grade average or an Indian COP graduate appointed to a presidential advisory council or a disabled Black Vietnam veteran giving hope to ghetto children in New Orleans. It was thoroughly predictable that such people, more even than their communities or institutions or COP staff, would give the COP sites their real character. And they were never in short supply.

The Effects of COP on the Schools

Images of COP in the schools are as varied as images of the 132 separate COP projects. In a few school systems COP was probably little more than a wispy, federally-funded program; in many others, it provided the impetus for important change along broad lines, with no single factor, but rather an amalgam of forces, emerging as the central COP contribution. COP was not just a popular front organization charged with advising or even sharing decision-making authority with the public school hierarchy. Nor was it just the physical presence of a COP aide in a Detroit or Navajo reservation classroom. The binding element was training. Closely linked was cultural and group identity. And for these, no amount of structural innovation -- however valuable to the COP process were open classrooms, modular instruction, role differentiation, or any other -- could provide an adequate substitute. As long as the basic conditions were met, the COP formula was flexible, with weighting of the mix left largely to the sensitive discretion of site administration.

> Training of COP aides represented a thoughtful blend of intellectual experiences and practical applications.
>
> Whether or not they had previously done it, teacher training institutions came to the community with site-based courses, on-site observation, and active participation in advisory councils -- all adding up to an attempt by higher education to become part of a rapidly changing scene rather than an observer, advisor, or chronicler.
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> The place of the educational paraprofessional in the schools was sanctioned and legitimatized through carefully constructed opportunities for rewarding careers, satisfying work, and the possibility of achieving higher professional status.
>
> Children in the COP schools were taught, more by example than from books, that being American Indian or Chicano or Puerto Rican or Cajun or Oriental or Black or hill country white was a source of pride and that these cultures should be nourished, not suppressed or discarded.

These were some of the main messages COP left in some school systems. Some of the concrete results stem from the messages, while others are nearly independent of them. Some outcomes, like those described below, were direct results of the availability and ability of the paraprofessionals and of the Career Opportunities Program.

-- In Honolulu, 19 COP participants worked as teacher assistants at Honolulu Community College. They worked in the reading and audio-visual laboratories, at the computer science center, in the chemistry and biology laboratories, in student services, and in the art, electronics, and industrial arts departments. These were not, of course, "normal" sites for paraprofessional activity.

-- In Minneapolis, COP participants managed an Indian Student Aide Program, while in Detroit, COP participants conducted a Youth Tutoring Youth Project involving 70 tutors and 280 tutees.

-- In Las Cruces, New Mexico, new relationships developed between school and community, largely through COP and through inter-institutional linkages in which COP played a prominent role.

-- At the start of the COP project in Jacksonville, Florida, the district employed 140 teacher aides. By 1974, there were 654, half supported by local funds. The example of the performance by the COP aides was a significant factor in the increase. At the initiation of COP, only the COP aides were on the career lattice; all 654 aides later joined.

-- As a result of the COP model, all paraprofessionals employed in the Trenton (N.J.) schools have improved salary schedules, pensions, sick leave, health insurance, and a career lattice -- a process which became the standard in most of the school systems in which COP functioned.

-- Based upon the successful experience with COP, a district-wide School Development Center for all levels of personnel was established in Lewiston, Maine, by the school district, the University of Maine, and the state department of education. This innovation survived the end of funding.

-- School system renewal was heavily abetted in Peoria, Illinois, as a result of COP's co-training of teachers and paraprofessionals.

-- In Pawtucket, Rhode Island, the COP project was found to be positive, conducive to better school operations, and "a credit" to all concerned.

-- Workships in humanizing education, career education, competency-based teacher education, among other topics, involved hundreds of Dade County (Fla.) teachers along with the COP participants.

-- In Cleveland, as part of the process of developing a performance-based evaluation of participants' student teaching experience, 60 teachers and principals participated in a semester-long series of intensive training workshops designed to build teacher competencies in supervisory, managerial, and minority responsibilities, and principal competencies in playing a professional leadership role in staff development.

-- Based upon the COP experience, the Rochester (N.Y.) school system used local funds to "buy" a college faculty position for teacher training.

-- In San Juan, Utah, COP project, LEA staff were used as field faculty by the IHE for on-site courses. The result was the improvement of LEA staff professional competency.

-- The inclusion of community people in a "needs assessment" in the design and ongoing revision of the Camden (N.J.) COP project has brought closer school-community collaboration. So, too, did the training of lay community people, a bilingual news report system, the community council, as well as, of course, the recruitment of COP participants from the community. In Camden, too, the integration of training programs for all 900 staff members (paraprofessionals, teachers, supervisors, and administrators) resulted from the COP initiative.

-- In addition to program activities, the Alaska COP projects provided services to children and the community, which included a preschool in Nondalton, a photography course in Togiak, a sports program in Tanana, a library in Nulato, translators in Bethel, ABE classes in Noorvik and Angoon, health services in Fort Yukon, and a Youth Tutoring Youth Program in Metlakatla.

-- At McKinleyville (California) High School, the Humboldt State University COP project discovered that 100, rather than the expected handful of Indian students were enrolled. Perceiving that many were actual or potential dropouts, the project conceived and instituted the Indian Students Retention Program.

-- The creation of career lattices, an important COP objective, in the five cooperating school districts of the Bay Area Bilingual Education League (BABEL) COP project in California meant that paraprofessionals would receive training in bilingual (Spanish, Chinese, or Pilipino) education, a policy that greatly facilitated the addition of bilingual classes to school curricula.

Analyzing the impact of COP's four Pennsylvania projects (Smethport, Scranton, Erie, Philadelphia) on local school systems, the independent Educational Research Associates of Bowie, Maryland, judged that "the schools were affected in a positive way." The specific efforts were:

-- the greatly increased use of teacher aides,

-- a significant change in the way they were used,

-- the beneficial impact of aides on the environment (specifically, in the case of Erie with a history of racial tension and violence, the reduction and ultimate disappearance of the disturbances that had plagued one location),

-- an increased leadership role for teachers,

-- increased opportunities for minority administrators,

-- growing dependence on local neighborhoods as a source of new teachers, and

-- a general acknowledgment that the COP-trained teachers would be more effective than others who had entered the various systems.

To these benefits, a report from the Texas Education Agency adds the significant point that the COP projects in that state (Edinburg, Crystal City, El Paso, Fort Worth/Dallas, Houston, Milland, San Angelo, and Edgewood-San Antonio) had yielded increased community involvement. One measure of this was the practice of home visits by teachers and COP participants which, the report concluded, "resulted in better

communication between parents, teachers, students, and school administrators." The report added, "the turnover rate of Career Opportunities Program aides has been very low, resulting in more stabilized and continuous community and parental involvement."

Many of the possible effects of COP on the schools cannot be attributed solely to this program. One, however, is an almost uniquely COP-generated force: the impact of paraprofessionals. Assessing this impact on the schools of Minneapolis and Duluth, Minnesota, the Minnesota Department of Education reported, "Teachers, school social workers, and principals spontaneously and repeatedly volunteered observations of:

"-- the positive impact of COP aides upon the individualization of instructors, (and)

"-- the importance of COP aides as a resource to the professional staff."

The Colleges and COP

For many of the 272 institutions of higher education involved in the program, the arrival of the Career Opportunities Program signaled important, often unanticipated, changes in the ways teachers were to be trained, students admitted, and instructional content delivered.

Although always central to the overall national COP design, the colleges and universities came, too, to occupy roles that had perhaps not been fully anticipated. Some of them, for example, became, willingly or not, the rough equivalents of remedial adult education centers. Many were introduced into new and different communities. A large majority adopted open admissions, at least for COP and COP-type applicants (older, more experienced, but perhaps initially less attured to academe than their "regular" peers in the colleges). Most found themselves offering instruction in ghetto, barrio and/or Indian reservation public schools. And many who had hardly expected it found themselves adopting major shifts in the way they would train teachers -- changes in practice teaching, more on-scene experience, increased emphasis on individualization, development of field-based practice, fewer theoretical and more practical situations and, possibly most important, institutional recognition that the post-secondary institution did not have all of the answers.

In fact, the mechanics of the COP arrangement, which featured the college as a sub-contractor of the school system, may have been one of COP's several most important contributions to teacher training in years to come. This was a role that must have required inordinately jarring adjustments for the larger, more established teacher training colleges and universities in the COP network. It could hardly have been easy for major state universities to make the necessary changes. And yet, before COP concluded, it had involved the state universities of Florida, Nebraska, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, Vermont, Virginia, Wyoming and Washington -- plus other public institutions too numerous to list. And private (or semi-public) colleges such as Boston University, The University of Southern California, Pittsburgh, Fordham, Temple, Mills and Texas Christian, also provided instruction to COP participants -- with spillover effects that will be measurable only with the passage of time.

Some typical examples of what went on in COP's 272 colleges and universities (211 four-year and 61 two-year) demonstrate the range of experiences and accomplishments, many of them "firsts," of several of those institutions during and as a direct consequence of COP:

> The Idaho colleges involved in COP gave practicum credit, assisted in developing career lattices, and instituted some competency-based programs.
>
> At the 10,000-student University of Louisville, COP's 125 participants forced the adoption of an almost open admissions policy which credits maturity, personal background, and work experience. Even non-high school graduates may be provisionally accepted and given a trial semester in which to achieve unconditional admission.
>
> Brigham Young University in Utah did these things:
>
> 1. relaxation of admissions criteria for COP trainees and, when occasion demands, presumably for similar others,
>
> 2. introduction of Indian history and linguistics, both featured in the COP sequence, into regular university curricula,
>
> 3. credit for off-campus courses,
>
> 4. an on-site teaching arrangement in which university faculty and five school staff members take COP classes on alternate weeks,
>
> 5. student teaching credit for regular aide-level classroom work observed by university supervisors for eight weeks,
>
> 6. development of an ingenious field-based graduate program, generated by some of COP's first 20 graduates, in guidance and counseling administration, and

7. institution of a graduate program in educational administration for COP graduates.

Mars Hill College of North Carolina instituted a full-year internship in the public schools for all teacher trainees as a result of the successful experience of the Asheville COP participants.

Pikesville College of Kentucky, which historically trained 85 percent of the local school system's teachers, included a greater field experience, as well as competency-based teacher education design, for all its students as a result of its experience with the Pike County COP project.

Special efforts were made to include Black colleges among the COP teacher training institutions. Particularly satisfactory collaborative relationships between white and Black colleges were set up to serve the COP projects in Baltimore and Nashville, among others.

As a result of the Indian Teacher Training Project (the COP program at Humboldt State College, California), nine Native Americans had graduated by 1974 as compared with ten Native American graduates over the past 50 years. In addition, a Native American Studies program was established and the college hired seven Native Americans in faculty and administrative positions, whereas in 1970, there were none.

The 36 Tempe, Arizona, COD participants who received the baccalaureate degree in August 1974 from Arizona State University were the largest group of Native Americans to graduate at one time from any Arizona college or university.

A cross-cultural teacher education program was instituted at the University of Alaska as a result of the Alaska COP-Teacher Corps program.

Waiving of SAT cut-off scores for admissions, new courses, credit for classroom work, reorganization of course sequences, and college faculty coming

to LEA classrooms were some of the changes in several North Carolina colleges and universities as a result of the Winston-Salem COP project.

As a result of their involvement with the Trenton, New Jersey, COP project, Mercer County Community College and Trenton State College established procedures regarding course credit transfers and sequencing of courses; new curricula were set up at MCCC; COP participants and community representatives were included in curriculum revision committees at both colleges; and a new practicum design was developed at TSC.

Inclusion of Peoria, Illinois, COP participants in classes with "regular" students at Illinois State University contributes, according to ISU faculty, to making those classes more "real" for the students.

The prestigious University of Southern California developed more flexible COP-influenced entrance requirements including:

1. evaluation of student based on student motivation rather than grades only,

2. waiving of the Scholastic Aptitude Test,

3. allowing eight units of field work experience as a teacher aide to be included among the sixty transferable units, and

4. requirement of one semester or less of student teaching as long as the student passes the competencies required.

At the University of Arkansas, all education majors now spend a portion of their time in the Foundations course working in the public schools, following the model introduced to the University by the Fayetteville COP project.

At Oakland University, which served the Pontiac, Michigan, COP project and where half the participants made the University's Honor Roll, the School of Education, as a result of the COP experience, now requires that prior to a student teaching, all students must have at least one term of internship similar to the role of the COP participant.

The EXEL (Experimental Program in Elementary Education) at Shepherd College, West Virginia, is a direct result of Shepherd's experience with the Martinsburg COP project. Indeed, the EXEL bulletin credits COP with introducing the concept of "substantial classroom experience early and continuously with methods handled in weekly seminars in lieu of the teaching block."

In Iowa, Des Moines Area Community College instituted a teacher aide program with the A.A. degree awarded after two years. The same institution now offers practicum credit to individuals in fields other than education for training achieved on the job.

Responding to the needs of the Parsons project, Kansas State College of Pittsburgh installed new courses, planned a program for training aides, and institutionalized an Administrators' Workshop on staff development.

The University of Nebraska in Lincoln saw these developments as a consequence of the local COP program:

1. public relations and communications with certain aspects of the community improved,

2. field-based courses greatly extended to meet the needs of COP participants,

3. some instructors more responsive to the needs of students -- especially to those of the COP participants,

4. the faculty and staff from the University of Nebraska working with COP more aware of some of the personal problems -- obstacles to learning -- affecting people who have a limited income, and

5. some methods of evaluation improved as a result of the emphasis on performance and field-based experiences.

At Humboldt State University in Arcata, California, the only "recognizable" (HSU's description) Indian students on campus were the 18 in the COP Indian Teacher Education Project; long before the project concluded, there were approximately 200, and a Native American Studies Program, as well as Native American classes, had been inaugurated at HSU.

Avila College of Kansas City, Missouri, reported such changes as these:

1. block courses and short workshops offered to COP students and made available to other students and in other than the Education Department;

2. many theory courses offered after school hours at the elementary school site for COP participants and expanded to on-site courses being offered at hospitals, businesses, and HEW offices by Avila College;

3. faculty for these courses, initially from Avila, now chosen from the sites themselves;

4. much more academic credit being granted for formal school and classroom experiences in all college education coursework; college working out details of a credit for Experience Program; concept already approved;

5. more independent study for responsible students;

6. for the most part, written senior year comprehensive examinations eliminated, with performance and competency-based criteria used to satisfy the graduation requirement in some cases.

Central Washington State College, the teacher training institution which served both the Tacoma and Yakima COP projects, reported these adjustments as a result of COP:

1. resident credit courses being offered locally,

2. adjusting transferable credits from other institutions,

3. registration for student teaching being held off campus,

4. post-student teaching seminar being held prior to student teaching,

5. COP interns making up the bulk of the student teacher load assigned to the CWSC student teacher supervisor for the Tacoma District,

6. has become more flexible in admitting candidates to teacher education from special programs, such as COP,

7. has become more flexible in endorsing students for student teaching,

8. is providing and fitting courses to the individual needs of each student, and

9. teacher education tests in math, English, reading and spelling waived for COP participants.

Whether and how many of these -- and many other -- solid examples of the effect of COP on colleges and universities will become permanent features at the institutions cannot yet be forecast. But substantial changes did take place during the life of COP, and many were clearly being introduced into the regular, post-COP behavior patterns of these institutions. For the most part, these were the colleges most in need of change. In the current jargon of accountability, the colleges provided "value added" for their COP students, and, so, too, the COP students provided "value added" to the colleges.

The COP Participant as Teacher

Evidence of the effectiveness (or, if need be, ineffectiveness) of COP-trained teachers was beginning to gather as COP concluded. Some of the accumulating data, overwhelingly positive, is cited here.

The COP program based at the University of North Dakota, with participants from four Indian reservation communities, provided college degrees and teacher certification for 51 new teachers of American Indian origin. Virtually all returned to their communities as full-fledged teachers, thereby creating or improving those conditions:

--better relations between children and their schools,

--a probable slowdown in the rate of teacher turnover,

--teachers thoroughly attuned to and identified with the children and their problems,

--community pride in Indian-related attitudes, and, far from least,

--proof that schools with Indian children could thrive with significantly larger percentages of Indian teachers.

Of 142 degree-earning COP participants in the Chicago project, 118 became teachers in "target area" schools, that is, in schools populated by children of low-income, minority (Black and Hispanic-American) background. In Hartford, Connecticut, virtually all graduating COP aides received regular teaching posts, even in the face of a marked surplus of teachers, while 12 of the Worcester, Massachusetts project's 15 1974 graduates landed teaching positions. Of the graduates of the eight projects in Nebraska, Missouri, Iowa and Kansas, 98 percent were employed, with 44 percent of them obtaining jobs in project school districts, another nine percent in other schools, and 28 percent continuing their studies in graduate school. Typical of this region was the situation in urban Des Moines, where 28 of 39 graduates were placed as teachers in the city's schools (and two more outside the district). In Idaho, where a small but widely dispersed

COP project produced 29 graduates, two-thirds became teachers in the schools the first year they were certified, and every member of the first COP graduating class in Kansas City was hired by the school system.

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The NCTL Assessments

In July 1974, the New Careers Training Laboratory undertook an evaluation study of COP with the purpose of focusing on COP graduates serving as first-year teachers within local school districts. While each district having a COP project was responsible for an ongoing evaluation of its project, none were responsible for the evaluation of the graduate as a teacher. The resultant study, then, was the first to look at this pivotally important aspect of the Career Opportunities Program -- the graduate as teacher.

Procedure

All 132 then-operating COP projects were canvassed in July 1974. Each project was requested to report the number of COP graduates, the total then employed in the district as teachers, and the school district's willingness to participate in the planned study. From the pool of 60 positive responses to an initial questionnaire and subsequent follow-up, 15 sites were selected to reflect the ten federal geographic regions and the diversity of COP models, and to provide some balance between urban and rural school districts.* The 15 sites were thus a stratified sample of the full COP universe which showed high congruence with the national COP project profile in terms of participant characteristics and project activities.

At each of the 15 sites, a sample of ten COP graduates was randomly selected from the pool of COP graduates employed there as first-year teachers. At each of the local schools where one or more of the ten COP graduates were teaching, first-year teachers who were not COP graduates were selected as a control group and matched with the COP graduates on the basis of being first-year teachers working in the same building and teaching the same grade.

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*Miami, Florida
Richmond, Virginia
Gary, Indiana
Grand Rapids, Michigan
Kansas City, Missouri
Tempe, Arizona
Helena, Montana
Takoma, Washington
San Antonio, Texas
Los Angeles, California
Chipley, Florida
Lewiston, Maine
Newark, New Jersey
Seattle, Washington
New Orleans, Louisiana

Instrumentation

Data were collected along three axes: the person, the process, the product.

Data on the person consisted of personal, demographic, and teacher training information, as well as those gathered by the Gordon Personal Profile and Personal Inventory and the Minnesota Teacher Attitude Inventory.

Data on the teaching process were gathered by the use of an administrator's comparative rating scale developed by project staff, the Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories, and the Ryans Classroom Observation Record.

Data on the product -- the effect upon the student -- were gathered by three instruments: the Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scale; a Parent Questionnaire designed by staff to elicit parental judgments about children's attitudes; and an individual data collection sheet which collected achievement test data on each student in the class of one of the teachers being studied, as well as information on attendance, tardiness, and disciplinary referral.

A variety of instruments along each of these axes was used to obtain a multifaceted picture of the two teacher cohorts, the COP-trained and the non-COP trained. In effect, a "Rashomon" picture was sought.

The Findings

Axis 1 - The Person

The COP-trained teachers were older, more likely to be Black, and slightly more likely to be males as compared with the non-COP trained. (For COP and non-COP, respectively, the mean age was 35 and 26, 52% and 26% were Black, and 75% of the COP teachers were female, as were 80% of the non-COP). The two groups did about as well in college, as measured by grades, although the COP-trained group expressed greater satisfaction with its college program. And a higher percentage of COP-trained teachers had enrolled and planned to enroll in post-baccalaureate education.

The COP-trained teachers had more positive attitudes as expressed on all eight scales of the Gordon Personal Inventory and Personal Profile, as well as the Minnesota Teacher Attitude Inventory. The differences were significant statistically on the Gordon scales for Original Thinking, Vigor, Ascendancy, and Sociability.

Axis 2 - The Process

On both measures of classroom activity used in this study, the COP-trained teachers performed in a more desirable manner. In their classrooms, there was more interchange between teacher and student and the students' talk was more responsive and extended. The interaction which more frequently characterized the classrooms of the COP graduates was, according to the pertinent research, more highly correlated with positive student performance. Principals who supervised the two groups of teachers favored the COP-trained teachers in comparison with other first-year teachers they had supervised.

Axis 3 - The Product

The children in the classrooms of the COP-trained teachers had a more positive self-concept, and their parents ranked their attitudes toward school more positively than did parents of children in the classrooms of the non-COP trained teachers. Although comprehensive achievement test data were not obtainable, achievement test data in which there were differences favored the children in the classrooms of the COP-trained teachers. Finally, the data regarding tardiness and disciplinary referrals were more positive for the children in the classrooms of the COP-trained teachers, while attendance data favored the non-COP trained teachers.

In sum,

-- where statistically significant differences were found on each instrument as a whole, they favored the COP-trained teachers in each case;

-- where statistically non-significant differences were found on each instrument as a whole, they favored the COP-trained teachers in each case;

--where statistically significant differences were found on subscales of instruments, they favored the COP-trained teachers in each case; and

--where statistically non-significant differences were found on subscales of instruments, they favored the COP-trained teachers in all but two cases.

The Meaning

The study found a series of consistent, although often small, more positive scores by the COP-trained teachers, as compared with the matched non-COP trained teachers in the same schools. The COP-trained teachers possessed a more favorable set of attitudes. In the classrooms, they demonstrated behaviors considered to be the more desirable ones for children's learning. Their supervisors ranked them higher. The children in their classrooms thought better of themselves and, with the exception of the score on one subscale, the children's parents believe those in the classrooms of the COP-trained teachers had better attitudes. And what slight differences there were in achievement test scores favored the COP-trained teachers' students.

It is not only this consistent set of findings but their pattern which merits attention. In comparing the classrooms of the COP-trained teachers with those of the non-COP trained, the investigators found two different teaching styles and two different student response patterns. The non-COP trained teachers engaged in more teacher-initiated interaction -- lecturing and questions and short answer dialogue -- while the COP-trained teachers interacted more directly with their students, elicited more and longer responses from the students, and responded more to students' comments when they arose. This more accepting and encouraging classroom behavior conduces toward more student verbal initiative, fuller responses, and more sustained interchanges. According to the pertinent research, these characteristics of classroom interaction are more desirable and correlate more highly with better student performance. The NCTL findings indicate this to be the case based on an assessment of the students' self-concept, parents' assessment of their attitudes, and their achievement.

These findings as to the success of the COP mode of teacher training were reinforced a year later. A follow-up study at the same 15 sites along Axis 1 (the person) revealed that COP-trained second year teachers were more aware than their peers of the "ethos" of the schools. Although the non-COP group was learning much about the quality and pace of school life, the COP teachers were appreciably ahead, and the gap was widening. There were also continuing pro-COP differences on pupil orientation. The COP teachers tended to be more accepting of individual differences among pupils and felt a greater sense of responsibility and accountability for the pupil's progress. The non-COP trained group tended in general to ascribe success or failure to the attitude of the pupil and failure of disciplinary action.

The follow-up assessment included two additional sites: the bilingual COP projects in Crystal City and Port Isabel, Texas. The findings in both cases paralleled those of the earlier study but with even greater differences between COP and non-COP trained teachers, notably in the areas of two-way exchanges between pupils and teachers. Even more significant were indications that, even though the non-COP trained teachers at these two sites were as good as the COP teachers at the 15 "regular" sites, the COP ones were even better. These higher standards were attributed to the unique qualities of bilingual education.

While retaining the evaluative processes used in the first year, the second year of the NCTL examination of COP products as teachers employed a new instrument to examine a broad panorama of school/teacher/pupil data at the 17 sites. It was discovered that non-COP teachers were readier to shift schools, to another community or even state, after one year of teaching, while the COP group remained committed to their communities even though their new professional status made moving more possible than it was. Too, the COP teachers were more inclined to (1) stay in the classroom rather than move on to allied pursuits, (2) complete a graduate degree during the next few years, and (3) retain their enthusiasm for teaching.

The second-year COP teacher, while primarily concerned with the teaching function, tended to view the school as a system and to be interested in such matters as organization,

morale, teacher competence, and committee membership. By the second year, her or his non-COP peers were more concerned with such day-to-day matters as class size, modes of supervision and rules and procedures.

Subtle but important differences characterized the two groups in other areas. Both believed themselves to be competent teachers, with the non-COP teacher emphasizing an ability to sensitize pupils to be sensitive to other pupils, to show respect and to understand the home backgrounds of different types of pupils. The second-year COP graduate, on the other hand, stressed competence in obtaining the cooperation of pupils, consistency in disciplinary approaches and the capacity to interpret effectively to the pupil in a manner designed to obtain the pupil's understanding. The study further revealed that the groups simply had different attitudes toward children and their behavior. The COP teacher, as a rule, tended to be understanding; the peer group, on the whole, was demanding.

Finally, the COP teacher shows stronger signs of believing that, once absorbed into the local school, (s)he will be able to exert a constructive effect for needed change there. Although by no means a radical force within the school, the COP product believes that such opportunities -- including those relating to work conditions, job security and collective bargaining -- do exist and that they can and should be taken.

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The effects of COP graduates clearly transcended even these formally assessed performances. In Ashville, North Carolina, where 24 of 27 COP "products" were employed locally as teachers, the school system anticipated less turnover on the part of Black teachers (who had traditionally sought better opportunities elsewhere) because the COP people were older and had firmer local ties. Similar beneficial by-products could be predicted, for example, in such localities as Port Isabel, Texas; Box Elder, Montana; and Tuskegee, Alabama, from all of which trained professionals in many fields historically tended to move to supposedly greener pastures.

At a different stage in the process -- that of the ungraduated COP aide occupying an instructional role in the schools -- there was no concerted attempt to measure effectiveness. Nor could there be. But the COP paraprofessional was

frequently a teacher in all but name, and her (or his) effect was almost invariably positive. The line between paraprofessional and licensed teacher became blurred as familiarity stimulated respect. The result, especially in rural COP projects such as Martinsburg, West Virginia; Crystal City, Texas; Alaska;and Lewiston, Maine, among others, was that aides often took over classroom for hours, even days and weeks, at a time. And once in the instructional seat, they brought to the children the infinite benefits of previous careers spent in non-schooling pursuits (such as fighting a war in Vietnam, as members of the New Orleans participant group had done), the sharing of experience as fellow students, and a variety of sensitivities that even the most compassionate regular teacher rarely possessed.

At the mid-way point -- the third year -- of its life, the Atlanta, Georgia,COP project essayed an interim judgment on how a teaching team consisting of a COP aide and "lead" teacher (plus certified reading teacher) was performing as a reading instructional group compared to a team in which the aide was not in the COP project. The average gain, unsurprisingly, was greater in every school grade from two to seven for the team with the COP participant. Whatever the method of assessment, the form of the "cut" taken at the data, or the location of the survey, the outcome has been consistent: the COP-trained teacher is performing at least as well as, and judged by the overwhelming majority of indicators, better than her (or his) non-COP peer. This outcome is all the more remarkable when non-quantifiable social factors such as the often inadequate prior education of the COP teacher, her (or his) probably prolonged absence from formal schooling before entering (or re-entering college), and the COP participant's obligation to a full-time position while receiving academic instruction are considered.

Some Conclusions: COP As An Educational Force

This report is not intended to be an assessment of the COP program (only the data on COP graduates as teachers approach definitiveness), and the conclusions cited in this section must therefore be considered as tentative and non-scientific. In reaching any conclusions, moreover, it is essential to state the initial objectives which motivate them. Five, cited often in COP literature, commend themselves as readily apparent and probably valid in the aggregate as the basic goals of the Career Opportunities Program and, therefore, as the backdrop for what follows. The five (as summarized in the excellent final report on COP of USOE Region VII) are to:

1. Attract low-income people (especially Vietnam era veterans) to new careers in schools serving low-income people.

2. Find better ways of utilizing school staff through developing career lattices of positions.

3. Encourage greater participation of parents and the community in education.

4. Find better ways of training personnel for schools through a combined classroom experience / college curriculum approach.

5. Increase cooperation between related programs and institutions.

Cutting across these lines, and generally defying rigid categorization as having been caused solely or partially by the presence of COP, are a number of tangible examples suggesting circumstances in which COP mattered. Some typical ones:

> Test data suggest that the second year of utilization of COP aides in the Little Rock, Arkansas, schools had an accelerating effect upon children's learning. The data indicate positive correlation between improved achievement and the presence of COP participants in schools. A decrease in behavioral problems has also been reported by teachers and principals.
>
> Native American children in bilingual programs where COP aides were used talked more in class than a control group of Native American children not in bilingual settings. As compared with the control group, these children showed both in English and the Native language significantly

less absence from school and significant increase in overall ability.

Fewer discipline problems, more individualized learning, greater opportunities for teachers to use their highest skills, and closer community involvement in the schools were reported by a principal as the effect of COP participants in the Camden, New Jersey, schools.

One hundred percent of the principals in schools where Pike County, Kentucky, COP participants worked reported that the academic performance of the children had improved as a result of COP.

There was greater achievement and improved self-image on the part of pupils in COP schools in Rochester, New York, than in comparable schools without COP participants.

Scores on the WISC were higher where COP participants were used than in comparable schools in Helena, Montana.

Comparing performance on the Metropolitan Achievement Test of similar classes of first grade children with and without COP aides in Durham, North Carolina, those with COP aides did significantly better on word knowledge, word discrimination, and reading, and slightly better in arithmetic; on all three of these subscales, those classes with COP aides scored above grade level, while the others scored below it. On tests for second grade children, classes with COP aides did better on four of five subscales on the MAT, while at the third grade level, classes with COP aides did better on six of eight subscales.

Principals reported improvements in discipline and learning conditions in classes where Peoria, Illinois, COP participants worked, and the parents of children in those classes reported that their children liked school more, had less difficulty, and were more eager to attend school, according to an outside evaluation.

In all grades but one, children's scores on the MAT in Atlanta, Georgia, Title I schools using COP participants were better than those Title I Schools without COP participants. Only in the schools using COP participants did children progress at an annual rate of one grade per year.

In Miami, Florida, an experimental project for young children with cognitive deficits which used COP participants as the major intervention strategy in a program of sequential stimulation and development resulted in a reduction of deficits twice as great as among a control group.

That COP produced a significant number of teachers from populations heretofore little represented in the teacher force is undisputable. Their number will no doubt exceed 6,000 and their quality is likely to be at least equal to the best of the traditional new teachers. Whether they will stick to teaching, whether they will grow and become better teachers, and whether the cost was worth the product is still difficult to judge. What is clear, however, is that a federally-designed program can be mounted across the country and it can provide a means to meet an important national priority.

This goal, that of meeting a special need, was the easier of the two. More complex for assessment is the view of COP as a demonstration. Here, it may be best to look to the components of the program one-by-one and then as a whole.

Let us look, first, at the structure.

The school district as grant recipient. There is no doubt that the scheme of funding the local school district and having it subcontract for services with the colleges and universities was successful. While it may have been possible to achieve the desired relationships between practitioner preparer and practitioner employer, the scheme adopted achieved the desired goal with few, if any, negative consequences.

The teacher training institution as partner in the in-service development of the school's staff. While the colleges and universities were able to adapt to

meet COP's needs, there continue to be limits as to their ability to be full participants in this process. Perhaps it is inappropriate to see them in such a role; rather, it may be that there will always need to be a mediating force, such as a COP project between the school district and the university.

The triad of school-college-community in a parity relationship. Clearly, all played a part at various levels of COP. What is made clear by the COP experience in this regard is that the roles of the three are not the same; that they vary by function and over time; that in contrast to the other two, the community both is more amorphous and lacking in an ongoing discrete set of functions and thus there is a tendency for it to be left by the wayside or to be involved only episodically; and that the continuing effective involvement of all three requires effort and expense,

The role of the state coordinator. The experience here is so divergent as to preclude any overall conclusions. Where done well, the state coordinator functions served significantly to abet program success. On the other hand, in some states, programs achieved high levels of success with little, if any, state involvement. Whether greater involvement would have led to higher degrees of success (or permanence) is not clear.

The role of the federal government. Having been the handiwork of powerful USOE leadership, COP soon was largely left to fend for itself. To a limited extent, it did this successfully. It was served well, by and large, by the middle-echelon officials who were responsible for it following its launching. The dispersal of federal project offices to the regions was a positive step, especially in the light of the frequent inability of Washington-based staff to travel and the penchant for staff reorganizations from which the staff in the regions were largely immune (or, at best, less effected).

Turning from structure to substance, we can focus on the COP participant, as worker and as student, and the interaction between the two roles. As a worker, the arrangement of

having salaries paid from a program source did little to hamper the COP program and, of course, stretched its dollars. As workers, COP participants provided yet additional evidence as to the usefulness and effectiveness of paraprofessionals. As students, they enjoyed a high level of success.

It is at the point of overlap between these roles that tensions arise. That which is most appropriate for a worker to be doing on the job is not necessarily the most instructive for the person who views the job as an experiential part of their professional preparation. Similary, that which is most valuable in a course for a student or a practitioner-to-be is not necessarily the most useful at the moment for someone who is seeking help in meeting job requirements. All this is to say that the problems inherent in seeking to combine work and study, to integrate theory and practice, have not been solved in COP. In an ideal situation, there is need for many "mores" -- more preparation of the teacher with whom the participant works; more opportunities for school people to have a chance to reflect and think; more chances for participants to enjoy experiences beyond their job -- to work in or, at least, visit schools other than their own, to try things out without the pressures of the classroom, to spend time in college courses irrelevant to their work. In addtion, more attention was needed to the personal burdens of participants and their families. Little thought was given, for example, to the tensions produced in a middle-aged, working class family when the wife gains an education, college degree and higher status job, to say nothing of an avalanche of attention and praise for her achievement.

What will remain? Of course, there will be the thousands of COP participants whose lives have been changed forever, both individually and as teachers. And, as a result, there will be the tens of thousands of children, both the natural ones of these participants and the pupils whom they will affect over their years as teachers, who will be changed.

There is the experience of a program which recognized the capability people had if only they were given the opportunity to develop and display it. This offers lessons for the establishment of public service employment programs ; for the setting of job qualifications based upon what a person can do; for the establishing of personnel procedures which emphasize "selecting in" and then training, rather than "screening out" for the rejection of the myth that all is set in a person's life at a very young age; for the establishment of new criteria of "college material"; for new indices of performance.

Institutionally, there are the particular changes in individual school systems and colleges, as well as the broader effect on statewide programs (Ohio, West Virginia, and Florida, among others), and on the general world of higher education for those other-than-the-middle-class white youth in residential programs. So, too, there is the change in the mode of the preparation of teachers -- changes which emphasize ongoing exposure to practice, simultaneous integration of work and study, the use of teams in instruction and learning, and the development of curricula suitable for a multicultural world.

The hard data that are available, mostly the information developed from such sources as the study of COP graduates as teachers, lead to different kinds of examples and conclusions.

First, and overall, it is evident that low-income adults, long away from formal education, can be recruited successfully to work in the schools, can do that work with benefit to children, can combine that work with successful performance as college students, and, as a result, can become effective teachers of low-income children. In sum, the concept of the Career Opportunities program is one which can be and, in this instance, has been successful.

In an assessment of COP midway in its course, Dr. William Smith, successor to Dr. Don Davies as Associate Commissioner of USOE's Bureau of Educational Personnel Development, labeled COP a "mid-range demonstration," an effort which brought together a series of program ideas found successful in earlier more limited efforts, which sought to demonstrate the potential in their combination and expansion. Among earlier ideas brought together in COP was the broad "new careers" concept which asserted that persons recruited from among the poor, when simultaneously provided jobs, training, and education, could become a new kind of professional. In a sense, COP is an expression of that concept.

More specifically, COP took up ideas such as: the potential of paraprofessionals to make a direct contribution to the delivery of human services, in this instance to the learning of low-income children; the usefulness of staff differentiation designs, particularly when combined with career advancement; the value of combining both work and study; the field-based focus of teacher education; and the involvement in relationships built upon parity of all the central parties (viz. school, university, and community people) to the professional preparation enterprise. While it is

premature to make judgments as to the relative efficacy of particular parts of the COP design, the overall findings do indicate that the COP principles have worked. That is, it has recruited, selected, trained, and graduated low-income adults who have, probably far more often than not, become successful teachers of low-income children.

At a time when teacher vacancies are fewer, it becomes all the more crucial that the persons employed as teachers perform well. In addition, given the public investment in teacher education, it is important that the persons so trained do become and remain teachers. Already with roots in their community, COP-trained teachers are more likely to remain there and to remain in teaching.

What is most essential is the recognition that among the vast pool of low-income adults are many persons, who, given realistic opportunities in a carefully designed program, can make powerful social contributions, in this instance, as teachers. As programs to staff the schools are developed, as plans to train persons to become teachers materialize, indeed, as persons are recruited to higher education at large, the potential of low-income, frequently minority adults, long absent from formal school but powered by their own motivation in the context of realistic opportunity, should not be ignored. The issue is not whether the Career Opportunities Program, as such, should be done again -- although few such efforts have been as successful. It is the program intent, the program design,and the program ethos which warrant extension and development.

For a program never mentioned in the legislation which made it possible, early left to fend for itself in a political climate not at all sympathetic to its ethos and efforts, and complicated to run at the local level, COP seems to have done well; most of all because of the power of the people whose ambition and energy it was able to tap, but, also, because of the effective administration at the operational level and the intrinsic power of its design.

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